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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the Honorable RICHARD BLUMENTHAL, a Senator from the State of Connecticut.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God, our Sustainer, silence everything in our Senators that would keep them from hearing Your wisdom. Control their minds this day that their focus may concentrate on You. Illuminate their path with the light of Your presence, providing them with the strength to walk with integrity.

Lord, give them a sense of duty that they will leave nothing that they ought to do undone. May they not be content to wait and see what will happen, but give them the wisdom and courage to make the right things happen.

We pray in Your holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable RICHARD BLUMENTHAL led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. INOUE).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, April 24, 2012.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable RICHARD BLUMENTHAL, a Senator from the State of

Connecticut, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Senate will soon be considering the motion to proceed to S. 1925, the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act.

At 10:30 this morning, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S.J. Res. 36, which is a resolution of disapproval regarding the NLRB election rule. The time until 12:30 today will be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders, or their designees.

The Senate will recess from 12:50 p.m. to 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings.

At 2:15 p.m., there will be a rollcall vote on the motion to proceed to S.J. Res. 36. If that motion is defeated, there will be several votes following it in order to complete action on the postal reform bill.

We are going to do our utmost to finish the postal reform bill today. I recognize that there is an important event with the Supreme Court today with the legislative branch, the Senate. Therefore, we might have to come back after that to complete work on this bill, unless there is a way forward.

I suggest to everyone, if their amendments can be accepted by voice vote, take that. If something can be worked out with the managers, do that; otherwise, we might be here until very late tonight. I would like to avoid that, if possible, for everyone's benefit.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, in 1994, the Violence Against Women Act passed both Houses of Congress on strong bipartisan votes. In the 18 years since then, incidents of domestic violence have fallen by 53 percent.

Despite that progress, staggering rates of abuse make it clear that we still have a long way to go. More than a third of women and more than a quarter of men in this country have been victims of violent sexual assault or stalking by a partner. Because of the unique nature of the crime, combating domestic violence and protecting those affected also requires unique tools.

Victims have been abused by the very people who are supposed to love and care for them, so Congress must make certain law enforcement has the means to stop these heinous crimes, and we must ensure communities have the resources to support victims and help them heal. That is why the Senate must move quickly to reauthorize this legislation, which expired last year.

Many of the programs under the act have been funded for the last year by continuing resolutions, but a full reauthorization is necessary to ensure authorities have all the resources they need to fight domestic violence.

Women and families across the country are depending on us to act. Several from Nevada wrote to share their stories.

When I practiced law, this law was not in effect. The only good news during that period of time that developed as I began to do more work in the domestic relations field was as a result of some generous people establishing in Las Vegas a domestic crisis shelter. What is that? It is a place where women and children can go to stay away from husbands who were abusing them. It is so important. These are secret locations; you cannot find them in the phone book. It gives these women and their children—sometimes just a woman—a place to go.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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